

# THE CIRCULAR.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.]

DEVOTED TO THE SOVEREIGNTY OF JESUS CHRIST.

[EDITED BY J. H. NOYES.]

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## TERMS AND MEANS.

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From the Perfectionist, Jan. 1845.

## The Rights of God.

If it were necessary to believe that the Creator is so independent and fixed in his resources of happiness, or so far exalted above the universe over which he presides, that he cannot be benefited or injured at all by the doings of his creatures, it would be folly to speak of his rights; for, on that theory, his nominal rights, whatever they might be, would be of no value to him; and rights that are worth nothing, are certainly not worth discussion. If the benefits of righteousness and the injuries of unrighteousness take effect only on the created, then, for all practical purposes, rights and wrongs should be considered as attaching only to the created; and duty should be regarded, not as service due to God, (for it can do him no good,) but as service due to self and other creatures. This, probably, is the philosophy which has possession of many heads and hearts.

But this is not our philosophy. We find no evidence, either in reason or revelation, that God made this vast and complicated universe without any expectation of benefit from it, (i. e., without any motive,) or that he has managed it six thousand years, and still continues to preside over it, and make laws for its inhabitants, without any personal interest in its results. The theory of the glorified throng around his throne is this—"Thou hast created all things; and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4: 11.) To this theory our reason and instincts heartily assent. If God is a husbandman, (as Christ frequently represents him,) and yet expects no profit from the fruits of his field; if he is a master, but derives no pleasure or benefit from the obedience of his servants; if he is a father, but has no joy in the prosperity of his children, he is certainly a being in whose image we are not made—a non-descript anomaly in the universe of life, as different from all natural conceptions, and from all scriptural representations of a glorious God, as a marble statue is from living flesh and blood.

The ultra-perfection of total unsusceptibility, which many are fond of ascribing to God, is, in our view, gross imperfection. What perfection can there be in that benevolence which derives no increase of pleasure from the increase of the happiness of the universe? And is not mere happiness without the power of growth, as inferior to happiness that is capable of everlasting expansion, as the buried gold of a miser is to wealth that goes abroad and accumulates?

We assume, then, that God, though independent of the created universe for the substratum of his happiness, is not too perfect or elevated to enjoy the fruit of his own labors; and that created beings, though they cannot positively make him unhappy, can, according to the limited measure of their power, diminish by their wickedness or increase by their righteousness, the sum of his enjoyment. If he has thus a personal interest in the results of creation, and of course in the doings of individual creatures, his rights are certainly quite as proper subjects of interest and investigation as the 'rights of man.'

According to the familiar principle that the maker of a thing is the owner of it, and has a right to all its proceeds, God is the owner of the created universe, and has a right to all the good that it can produce. \*This right clearly defines the highest duty of all created beings, who have intelligence to perceive, and power to affect the interests of their Maker. As the happiness of God is the end for which all things were made, every rational being is bound to devote himself exclusively to that object. This principle discloses the foundation and the rightfulness of the great law—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with ALL thy heart and with ALL thy soul and with ALL thy mind and with ALL thy strength." God demands the whole, because, as maker and owner he has a right to the whole. Any thing less than entire and exclusive devotion to his interests, is wrong, because it does not respond to his right.

This truth condemns not only the grosser forms of selfishness with which the world abounds, but some of those 'things which are highly esteemed among men' as eminent virtues. If a man devotes himself to his own peculiar interests, he is despised. But if he devotes himself to the interests of his family and friends, he gains some esteem. If his heart is enlarged, so that it embraces the interests of a nation, he is highly honored. And when he overleaps the enclosure of patriotism, and devotes himself to the interests of the whole human race, he is generally thought to have reached the climax of goodness. But in the light of God's rights, all these forms of heart-service are equally wrong. Devotion to 'humanity' no more responds to the lawful claim of the Creator, than devotion to self. The whole human race, as well as all of its individual parts, was made for the happiness of God; and he who seeks the happiness of the race, otherwise than as the means of the happiness of God, as really disregards the rights of God and the end of his own existence, as he who seeks exclusively his own happiness.

The primary law of God, which, as we have seen, perfectly corresponds to his rights, leaves no place for the love of created beings otherwise than as means of the happiness of the Creator. The question is often asked—"If we are to love God with ALL our heart, soul, mind and strength, how can we love ourselves or our neighbor, as the second precept of the law requires?" The only answer which the case admits of, is, that we are to love ourselves and our neighbors, only as the means of the happiness of God. In this way our love of the secondaries becomes a part of our love of the primary. Loving God with all the heart, instead of excluding, necessarily involves the love of the means of his happiness, i. e. the love of all things which he has made for his pleasure, ourselves and our neighbor included. In this we see the reasonableness of the impartiality required by the precept—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor AS THYSELF." Its meaning, as defined by the first precept, is this:—"Thou shalt not love either thyself or thy neighbor as a primary, but as a means of the happiness of the Creator; and considered as a means to that end, the happiness of thy neighbor is as valuable as thine own."

It is but an evasion of the rights of God to say, as many do, that we discharge our obligations to him by doing good to his creatures.—As well might the self-worshiper say that he discharges his obligations to society by doing good to himself, or the patriot that he serves humanity by serving his country. As well might a tenant say that he pays his rent to his landlord by paying his debts to his fellow-tenants. What if each of his fellow-tenants should say the same? Where would the landlord get his revenue? No such commutation of service is

licensed by reason, or scripture. God, by his law, demands no indirect external service, but the direct allegiance of the heart; no half-way allegiance, no partnership in affection distributed according to the popular theory of loving all things in due proportion,—God supremely and other things co-ordinately—but the whole heart, soul, mind and strength, for himself alone. This is his right. The electric fluid of the human heart must first discharge itself exclusively and directly upward into God, and its action on all inferior beings must be only the 'returning stroke.'

The virtue of men's benevolence, regard for human rights, &c., may be tested by their position in relation to this first great right of God. For the essence of true benevolence is an impartial desire that every being may have its rights. Regard for universal truth and order, enters into and is an essential element of all genuine regard for human rights. Now the right of God to the exclusive heart-service of all his rational creatures, appeals as directly to this regard for truth and order, as does the right of the negro to his liberty. True, it does not appeal so palpably to the feeling of compassion; for God, though wronged, is not ruined, as the negro is by the loss of his rights. But the wrongs of God are as offensive to the love of justice, (which is a better part of true benevolence than mere compassion,) as are the wrongs of the negro—nay, much more so, because his rights are vastly greater. And when it is shown, (as it easily can be) that the wrongs of the negro are the consequences of the wrongs of God,—that men rob their fellow-men of liberty, because they have first robbed God of their hearts,—then all the compassion, even, which slavery excites, goes to swell the tide of abhorrence which is due to the wrong inflicted on God by disobedience to his law.—Intelligent Bible moralists can have no confidence whatever in professions of regard for human welfare and human rights, made by men who do not, first of all, yield to their Creator his rights, by loving him with all the heart.

But it may be asked—"Is it possible that a being capable of individual happiness, and of course naturally self-loving, should set his heart with exclusive devotion on the happiness of another?" This is the old question about the possibility of disinterested benevolence. It amounts to this: Is it possible for created beings to render to their Creator that which is manifestly, and confessedly, his due? The instinct of reason answers, Yes. The instinct of worldly feeling says, No. The gospel helps us to a satisfactory solution of this long-pondered problem—a solution which is not available, however, to those who see nothing but mysticism in the spiritual doctrines of the Bible.

Supposing the ordinary state of insulation and separation from God to be the normal condition of the human race, (as it is doubtless supposed to be by the philosophers who usually handle the question about disinterested benevolence,) we would not undertake to maintain the possibility of man's loving God with all his heart. We can no more conceive that a separate, self-loving being, should by his own will love another being with perfect devotion, than that a planet should, by its own self-originated motion, make itself a satellite of the sun.—But we can conceive that one being should be so possessed by the spirit of another, that his self-love should be wholly overborne, and he should love that other and live for him, with perfect disinterestedness, just as we can conceive that the planet may be so under the influence of the sun's attraction, as to become its unswerving satellite. Two are better than one. The sun and planet together can do what the planet alone cannot do. So God and

man together can do what man alone cannot do. It is demonstrated by experience, by scripture, and even by modern science, that one spirit can possess and actuate another. If this can be done at all, it can be done perfectly, under suitable conditions. If God could possess the minds and speak through the organs of the prophets, there is no physical or metaphysical reason why he cannot enter into the whole life of human beings, and shed abroad his own love in their hearts, to the entire crucifixion of self-love. He loves himself (as it is right that he should) with perfect love. Now if his spirit and man's are brought together, and the stronger prevails over the weaker, the self-love of man must be swallowed up in the love of God. This is the simple method by which the gospel proposes to fulfill in man the righteousness of the law. The atonement brings the divine and human spirits together. God in Christ, and Christ in his body the church, constitute a spiritual unit, in which human individuality is so far overborne that God's love of himself is the love of all. Every member is 'dead' to himself, and 'alive' only to God. This is the only way that we know or can conceive of, by which human beings can love God with all the heart.

The insulated condition of man is not a natural, but a diseased, fallen condition. The law requires a state of the affections which he can have only in conjunction with God. Consequently the law, in effect, requires him to enter into conjunction with God. This is the true design of the law. It is a 'schoolmaster unto Christ.' It blazes before man in his insulated selfish condition, the rights of God—rights which can be responded to only by the entire sacrifice of self, and entire devotion to the happiness of another. Reason sanctions its demands. The susceptibilities which delight in truth, order and right, utter their desires for the satisfaction of these demands. Yet the man finds a 'law in his members, warring against the law of his mind and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin.' Self-love cannot expand itself, by its own motion, into the love of God. When the captive sees that his own efforts to obey the law avail nothing; when he looks this way and that, and finds no refuge from the inexorable claim; when he considers that all hope of his own ultimate happiness, except as a tributary and sacrifice to the happiness of God, is, by the very nature of things, vain;—and when at last he turns away from himself, and resolves in despair to yield up his life to the spiritual messenger which God has sent to demand and receive it, he sinks into Christ, his individuality is merged in the self-consciousness of the Father and the Son—he dies, and a 'new creature' arises from his grave. The old man was insulated, and self was necessarily the centre of his affections. The new man is in spiritual unity with another being,—a member of Christ—and by the force of a love not his own, turns to God as the eternal centre of his affections. Thus, and thus only, can man cease to trample on the first and largest of the rights of God.

## Truth Telling.

We give an interesting chapter from the *Memoirs of Margaret Fuller*, a work lately published, edited by W. H. Channing and R. W. Emerson. Our selection is from the pen of the latter; and is a rich contribution to the book.

But Margaret crowned all her talents and virtues with a love of truth, and the power to speak it. In great and in small matters, she was a woman of her word, and gave those who conversed with her the unspeakable comfort that flows from plain dealing. Her nature was frank and transparent, and she had a right to say, as she says in her journal:—

"I have the satisfaction of knowing, that, in

my counsels, I have given myself no air of being better than I am."

And again:—

"In the chamber of death, I prayed in very early years, 'Give me truth; cheat me by no illusion.' O, the granting of this prayer is sometimes terrible to me! I walk over the burning ploughshares, and they sear my feet. Yet nothing but truth will do; no love will serve that is not eternal, and as large as the universe; no philanthropy in executing whose behests I myself become unhealthy; no creative genius which bursts asunder my life, to leave it a poor black chrysalis behind. And yet this last is too true of me."

She describes a visit made in May, 1844, at the house of some valued friends in West Roxbury, and adds: "We had a long and deep conversation, happy in its candor. Truth, truth, thou art the great preservative! Let free air into the mind, and the pestilence cannot lurk in any corner."

And she uses the following language in an earnest letter to another friend:

"My own entire sincerity, in every passage of life, gives me a right to expect that I shall be met by no unmeaning phrases or attentions."

"Reading to-day a few lines of —, I thought with refreshment of such lives as T.'s, and V.'s, and W.'s, so private and so true, where each line written is really the record of a thought or feeling. I hate poems which are a melancholy monument of culture for the sake of being cultivated, not of growing."

Even in trifles, one might find with her the advantage and the electricity of a little honesty. I have had from an eye-witness a note of a little scene that passed in Boston, at the Academy of Music. A party had gone early, and taken an excellent place to hear one of Beethoven's symphonies. Just behind them were soon seated a young lady and two gentlemen, who made an incessant buzzing, in spite of bitter looks cast on them by the whole neighborhood, and destroyed all the musical comfort. After all was over, Margaret leaned a cross one seat, and catching the eye of this girl, who was pretty and well-dressed, said, in her blandest, gentlest voice, "May I speak with you one moment?" "Certainly," said the young lady, with a fluttered, pleased look, bending forward. "I only wish to say," said Margaret, "that I trust, that in the whole course of your life, you will not suffer so great a degree of annoyance as you have inflicted on a large party of lovers of music this evening." This was said with the sweetest air, as if to a little child, and it was as good as play to see the change of countenance which the young lady exhibited, who had no replication to make to so Christian a blessing.

On graver occasions, the same habit was only more stimulated; and I cannot remember certain passages which called it into play, without new regrets at the costly loss which our community sustains in the loss of this brave and eloquent soul.

People do not speak the truth, not for the want of not knowing and preferring it, but because they have not the organ to speak it adequately. It requires a clear sight, and, still more, a high spirit, to deal with falsehood in the decisive way. I have known several honest persons who valued truth as much as Peter and John, but when they tried to speak it, they grew red and black in the face instead of Ananias, until, after a few attempts, they decided that aggressive truth was not their vocation, and confined themselves thenceforward to silent honesty, except on rare occasions, when either an extreme outrage, or a happier inspiration, loosened their tongue. But a soul is now and then incarnated, whom indulgent nature has not afflicted with any cramp or frost, but who can speak the right word at the right moment, qualify the selfish and hypocritical act with its real name, and, without any loss of serenity, hold up the offence to the purest daylight. *Such a truth-speaker is worth more than the best police, and more than the laws or governors; for these do not always know their own side, but will back the crime for want of this very truth-speaker to expose them.* That is the theory of the newspaper,—to supersede official by intellectual influence. But, though the apostles establish the journal, it usually happens that, by some strange oversight, Ananias slips into the editor's chair. If, then, we could be provided with a fair proportion of truth-speakers, we could very materially and usefully contract the legislative and the executive functions. Still, the main sphere for this nobleness is private society, where so many mischiefs go unwhipped, being out of the cognizance of the law, and supposed to be nobody's business. And society is, at all times, suffering for want of judges and headsmen, who will mark and lop these malefactors.

Margaret suffered no vice to insult her presence, but called the offender to instant account,

when the law of right or of beauty was violated. She needed not of course, to go out of her way to find the offender, and she never did, but she had the courage and the skill to cut heads off which were not worn with honor in her presence. Others might abet a crime by silence if they pleased; she chose to clear herself of all complicity, by calling the act by its name.

It was curious to see the mysterious provocation which the mere presence of insight exerts in its neighborhood. Like moths about a lamp, her victims voluntarily came to judgment: conscious persons, encumbered with egotism; vain persons, bent on concealing some mean vice; arrogant reformers, with some halting of their own; the compromisers, who wished to reconcile right and wrong;—all came and held out their palms to the wise woman, to read their fortunes, and they were truly told. Many anecdotes have come to my ear, which show how useful the glare of her lamp proved in private circles, and what dramatic situations it created. But these cannot be told. The valor for dragging the accused spirits among his acquaintance to the stake is not in the heart of the present writer. The reader must be content to learn that she knew how, without loss of temper, to speak with unmistakable plainness to any party, when she felt that the truth or the right was injured. For the same reason, I omit one or two letters, most honorable both to her mind and heart, in which she felt constrained to give the frankest utterance to her displeasure. Yet I incline to quote the testimony of one witness, which is so full and so pointed, that I must give it as I find it.

"I have known her, by the severity of her truth, mow down a crop of evil, like the angel of retribution itself, and could not sufficiently admire her courage. A conversation she had with Mr. —, just before he went to Europe, was one of these things; and there was not a particle of ill-will in it, but it was truth which she could not help seeing and uttering, nor he refuse to accept.

"My friends told me of a similar verdict, pronounced upon Mr. —, at Paris, which they said was perfectly tremendous. They themselves sat breathless; Mr. — was struck dumb; his eyes fixed on her with wonder and amazement, yet gazing too with an attention which seemed like fascination. When she had done, he still looked to see if she was to say more, and when he found she had really finished, he arose, took his hat, said faintly, 'I thank you,' and left the room. He afterwards said to Mr. —, 'I never shall speak ill of her. She has done me good.' And this was the greater triumph, for this man had no theories of impersonality, and was the most egotistical and irritable of self-lovers, and was so unvarnished, that one had to hope in charity that his organ for apprehending truth was deficient."

It has always been the reproach of Perfectionists that they abolish law; and language is tortured nowadays to describe their supposed abandonment to misrule and barbarism, because they do not profess to be under its restraint. But the passages we have italicized in the preceding article, recognize a moral influence superior to law, and suppose conditions in which it would be safe for society to dispense with governments and governors. When this truth is generally accepted, we shall be restored to caste; for in our system of criticism we have realized these conditions. Law has not been abolished among us any faster than truth-telling has taken its place. Early in Mr. Noyes' religious experience, before he became a Perfectionist, he learned the virtue of criticism. We may find, indeed, the germ of our present system in the following passage from his Religious History, giving account of a society with which he was connected, while a student at Andover:

"One of the weekly exercises of this society was a frank criticism of each other's character, for the purpose of improvement. The mode of proceeding was this: At each meeting, the member whose turn it was, according to the alphabetical order of his name, to submit to criticism, held his peace, while the other members, one by one, told him his faults in the plainest way possible. This exercise sometimes cruelly crucified self-complacency, but it was contrary to the regulations of the society for any one to be provoked or to complain. I found much benefit in submitting to this ordeal, both while I was at Andover and afterward."—*Religious History*, page 4.

In his writings, while he discards the imperative element of the law, he magnifies the eternal truth of which the law is a copy—the 'sound doctrine' and instruction expressed in the law: and all his personal influence has been to bring his followers under the attractions of the truth. All that the law has lost of respect from him, the truth has more than gained; all the liberty he has given, has been guarded a thousand times with the watchwords of good counsel.

In practical Association we have had no laws, but we have had truth-speakers. The time which might have been spent in framing constitutions and settling

articles of agreement, has been spent in perfecting a system of free criticism, by which the truth should have full sway. We can truly say, that frankness and honesty, such as Margaret Fuller had, command the highest premium in our society. It is the first business of the Association to give voice and utterance to the truth—to educate critics, and provide for the free exercise of their function.

The moral power of this truth-telling system is incomparably greater than that of law. A really godless liberty-seeker would be glad to escape from the tyranny of our criticism, to the most rigid law-rule in the world. Such persons complain that our system is awfully cramping—they are afraid to stir. The conscientious, and those who love improvement more than they fear mortification and wounded pride, find criticism to be sunshine and dew and fruitful showers, but it is thunder and lightning to those who cleave to sin. If any join the school without counting the cost, they are sure to cry mercy. Our truthfulness is more than they are prepared for.

Under this system, it is true that every thing depends on our truth-speakers having nice conceptions of moral beauty, and an elevated standard of character as their model. For this we rely on spiritual fellowship with Christ, established at the centre, and enjoyed in different degrees throughout the whole social body. The contemplation of his perfections, and of the description of charity, by Paul, is the study of our school; and this is our claim of qualification as moral critics. 'Love is the fulfilling of the law'—a perfect substitute. Those who complain of our abolishing the law, should do us the justice to examine and see what amount of love and truth we have—the two best conservators of virtue, according to scripture and all true philosophy.

## THE CIRCULAR.

BROOKLYN, MAR. 14, 1852.

### Perplexities of the Press.

The newspapers are getting themselves into a sad tangle of perplexity about the Oneida Community. The extravagant account of its character started by the New York Observer, and caught up, echoed and increased by other religious presses, is unsustained by facts, unsustained by the people best acquainted with it, and naturally falls to the ground by its own improbability. Then as to the origin, history, and connections of the movement, a similar confusion reigns. The facts themselves are simple, and have always been accessible in our publications; but it seems a matter of immense difficulty for editors to get hold of a true statement just at this time. They run off into laborious and far-fetched fictions to account for our existence, when the simple truth would apparently do as well, and be much easier to handle. They connect us on the one hand with the Oberlinites, and on the other with the Fourierists; when they might easily know that our system had an independent origin in the New Haven Theological Seminary, and has always repudiated both Oberlinism and Fourierism. A religious editor at Syracuse works out a column of conjecture about other matters equally absurd, and equally needless; for the truth has been perfectly accessible to him, either by personal inquiry or in our publications, any time these four years past. Among other things he ingeniously supposes that the Community employed some one to publish their Report at Worcester, Mass., to avoid the responsibility of publishing it themselves. All our readers know that our First Report was published at Oneida, and freely circulated according to the demand, more than a year before Cooley's partial publication at Worcester, and that the latter was simply a spiteful attempt to injure the Community. The editor in conclusion accounts for the good neighborhood reputation of the Community, by insinuating that the respectable merchants of the vicinity have been bribed!

It is evident that the Editors are all in the dark, jumping hither and thither at false conclusions, and not likely, as things are going, to come to any satisfactory solution of the problem they are dealing with. We would suggest the propriety, under these circumstances, of all persons interested, particularly the religious editors, stopping where they are, and praying over the matter. This was the course which our Puritan forefathers were accustomed to take in all situations of difficulty; and we are sure if the champions of religion will take this advice, and seriously go to the Supreme Wisdom with the case now before them, they will get light, and be able to proceed truthfully and efficiently, in the course of their duty. Whatever may be the character of the Community, it is evident that God has some meaning in the development; and it should be their duty to find out what that meaning is. The only possible way to do us justice, whether we are good or evil, is to find out God's mind about the case, and learn all the lessons that he designs to convey. Mere foul-mouthed blustering will amount to nothing, except to complicate the day of settlement with God. Very possibly it will appear that he intended to broach at this time certain great subjects that have slept unsettled, and in darkness, ever since sin came into

the world; but whose examination will bear no longer delay. Very possibly he has made use of the Oneida Community for this object; and if so, the question of their personal character, whether good or evil, is altogether of secondary importance,—men will find their attention demanded to the point that God has in view. The times are fruitful in new questions—human inquiry is being propelled into startling investigations on every hand; and the man is rash who plants himself in its way, or undertakes to hold any thing exempt from its touch. With all the instruction we have before us of God's providential working, and the mighty law of progress, the best advice we can offer to the perplexed moralists and religious editors, is to 'watch and pray.' s.

### Louis Napoleon.

There are many Americans who frequently met Louis Napoleon in English Society, during his exile from France. And they must all have noticed one marked feature of his character, which goes far towards explaining his recent course. He was then, and is now, as thorough an enthusiast as any religious devotee or social reformer of the past or present age. He has always believed himself destined by Heaven to revenge the defeat and renew the glories of the first NAPOLEON. In conversation during his banishment, he steadily spoke of himself as one marked out for great deeds, and of all the revolutions and troubles of France as only the preparation for his certain advent. There was in his manner, while speaking of these things, nothing affected or overwrought, but an apparent sincerity and earnestness of conviction. He seemed to regard himself as distinctly set apart for that special work, and as only awaiting the time when Providence should open the door for him to enter upon its performance.

This view of his character explains the apparent madness of his repeated attempts at the invasion of France. While exiled from its dominions, powerless, friendless, and destitute of resources, he entered France under the expectation that her people would instantly rally around his standard and place him at the head of public affairs. Not a thought of failure seems to have disturbed him, nor a moment's apprehension that he might lose his head in the enterprise. And so throughout his imprisonment he preserved the same impassable equanimity, relying upon the same ultimate destiny, and considering past failures as only temporary interruptions of the great designs which Providence had in store for him.

This view of his character certainly explains his past conduct better than any other. And it may also throw some light upon his intentions and probable career in the future. During his exile he repeatedly spoke of himself as destined to retrieve the disaster of Waterloo. Not long after his election as President, he spoke of that as the great blot upon the French escutcheon—the only disgrace which had never been wiped away. Not long before his usurpation, he addressed the army, as involved with him in that great calamity, and as bound together by a common necessity for its retrieval. THIERES, not long ago, published a remark made by Louis Napoleon, in conversation with him, that he thought a foreign war expedient and essential for France. And a thousand minute incidents, known to those who have kept the run of current events, combine to show that the fanaticism which raised him to power still stimulates and guides him in its exercise. He still believes himself the legitimate successor of NAPOLEON, the inheritor of his glory,—the *ultor ex ossibus* upon whom devolves the duty of revenging his wrongs and reestablishing the supremacy of his name.

What this bodes for the prolonged peace of Europe, every one can judge for himself. With a madman on the French throne, ordinary calculations of the future are essentially deranged.—*New York Daily Times*.

We do not see why this writer should call Louis Napoleon an enthusiast and fanatic, so long as events are as good as his faith; and his visions are proved to be no air-castles. Should he go on and actually retrieve the disaster of Waterloo, would his confidence in destiny still be called madness? It is a madness that has power in it, and we think it is but a step from wisdom. The Bible encourages something very much like it. Paul says to Timothy, 'This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies that went before on thee, that by them thou mightest war a good warfare.' Timothy was to war a good warfare by faith in his destiny—the prophecies that went before on him, would make him bold, steady, and strong. Paul had his own destiny foretold him, and worked by it; and knew when he had finished his course. This is very conspicuous in all his history. He says, 'a necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel;' 'a dispensation of the gospel was committed to him;' and he had no fear of stones, or bonds, or shipwreck—he was a man of destiny, and dared every thing till he knew he had finished his work. We believe, indeed, there is encouragement in the Bible for all to inquire their destiny—find out what they were made for, and work with the advantage which such foresight gives. 'We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.' God has appointed a certain work for every one to do, and we may modestly seek to know his plan for us. Many persons have a premonition of their destiny, if they would heed it. Our destiny, is our hope in every thing, more than our purpose or resolution or ambition. Truly, we cannot escape destiny, it will pursue us; but the sooner we recognize it, and give ourselves up to it, the better.

In such a case as Louis Napoleon's, suppose the presentiments are only strong imaginations; they have power to realize themselves. How much more shall faith in a heaven-revealed destiny? n.



### Methodist Changes.

By the politeness of the publishers, Messrs. Harpers, we have a copy of Isaac Taylor's new book on 'Wesley and Methodism.' We marked the following passages for the information they contain.

#### WESLEY AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

"Wesley's most prominent infirmity was his wonder-loving credulity;—from the beginning to the end of his course this weakness ruled him. Few were the instances in which he exercised a due discrimination in listening to tales involving what was miraculous, or out of the order of nature. It is, in fact, mortifying to contemplate an instance like this, of a powerful mind bending like a straw in the wind before every whiff of the supernatural. It was only in the course of things that, with a leader thus minded, those who followed, and they being for the most part the uneducated, should be relators of wonders, and should eagerly listen to whatever brought with it this ever-coveted species of excitement. The personal histories of the Methodist worthies, their autobiographies and obituaries, are rendered distasteful by the too copious admixture of incidents which try the faith of a cool-tempered reader. In truth, some of these narratives are much in the style of those 'Lives of the Saints,' which none but good Catholics should be allowed to look into.

And yet, notwithstanding the decisive start which was thus given to the supernatural at the commencement of Methodism, it presently fell back from its foremost position in the system, and came to be less and less sought after every year. At the present time, and so it has been for a long while past, no more encouragement is given to this morbid appetite by the regular Wesleyan ministers than is done by any other body of instructed religious teachers. Miracles are neither looked for, nor are they desired, in that communion. A Wesleyan superintendent, would in most cases, be forward to sift to the bran any wonderment story that he might find to be agitating his circuit; and the spread of a popular delusion within the body, involving an alleged miracle, would be regarded by Wesleyan principals only in the light of an ill-omened occurrence. Let the attempt be made to persuade the lower classes of that communion that a certain bust of Wesley may be seen, now and then, to wink, weep, and grin! Would such an attempt be authorized by 'Conference?' and yet, a hundred years ago, 'the enthusiasm of Methodists' might have been thought to be rapidly advancing toward such a stage of credulity as this; but this tendency has entirely ceased to show itself."

It is possible that Wesley had sometimes an improper credulity; but we think, that what Mr. Taylor calls his infirmity, i. e., an openness to belief in the miraculous, was one main secret of his strength. In going back from this, to a cold, critical state of the spirit, 'which neither looks for, nor desires' direct manifestations of God's power, Methodism has certainly made a great change from the original ground, and one not favorable to its power, spirituality, or permanence.

The following paragraph shows the singular constitution of the Methodist establishment in England:

"Wesleyan Methodism, as a legally recognized establishment, is known to the State, and is protected by it, in this manner:—Its chapels and other chattels are held in trust, for, and under the control of the 'Conference of the people called Methodists;' and these chapels are to be entered upon, used, and enjoyed by the members of that corporation, and by those, forever, whom they may appoint; and these ministers, thus entitled to use the property of which the trustees are legally seized, are themselves bound by one condition only; but it is a condition which was ill-imagined at the first, and the intolerable oppression of which must be sensibly enhanced by every instance of progress in intelligence and scriptural understanding that may be going on around it. The Conference Preachers themselves, and those whom they appoint, and the body of local preachers, are to teach that doctrine, 'and no other,' which is set forth in the first four volumes of the Rev. John Wesley's Sermons, and in his Notes on the New Testament! It is the part and duty of Wesleyan trustees to hold the preachers, tightly, to the letter of some dozen volumes of heterogeneous and polemical theology! undesirable duty—impracticable obligation!"

"Little as Wesley could have imagined such a course of things as likely to arise from the constitution he gave to his Conference, there has in fact resulted from it this singular state of things—namely, that, in respect of the position of the ministers toward the people, which is that of irresponsible 'lords of God's heritage,' the professedly Christian world is thus parted:—on the one side stand all Protestant Churches, episcopal and non-episcopal, Wesleyanism excepted; on the other side, stands

the Church of Rome—with its sympathizing adherents—the malcontents of the English Church, and—the Wesleyan Conference!—This position maintained alone by a Protestant body, must be regarded as false in principle, and as in an extreme degree ominous."

### Revivals.

It appears from accounts which we publish below that a new religious interest is springing up in various places, somewhat in the spirit of the great Revival twenty years ago. We sincerely rejoice in this, and shall add our influence most heartily to the movement. Perfectionism was born in a revival, and all its interests and sympathies are with the revival spirit. We shall watch the movement attentively, and probably have more to say on the subject hereafter.

From The Independent.

#### The Revival in Hartford.

Hartford, March 3, 1852.

GENTLEMEN:—You have briefly noticed in your paper the fact of a revival in this city, and it may not be uninteresting to your readers to be made acquainted with the particulars, so far as it is proper to lay them before the public.

It is now nearly ten years since there was a pervading interest in religion in this community, and, as might be expected, the state of spirituality in the churches, and of morals among the ungodly, had become lamentably low. Of late years the business of Hartford has considerably increased; railroads have been made in various directions, manufactories have been erected, the population has advanced, and a tide of outward prosperity has rolled in. In the absence of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the piety of the churches gradually sunk, till few were found at the meetings for prayer, and the mass of professors were scarcely distinguishable from the world. Meanwhile intemperance gained ground, the young men became dissipated, the young ladies were gay and frivolous, and a generation of youth between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five filled our congregations, of whom scarcely any were converted. In addition to worldliness and vice, the Spirit of God was grieved by various theological errors and ecclesiastical differences. Many had become skeptical on the subject of revivals; for in their absence, Christians not being engaged in them, and having grown cold in religion, took to speculating on their evils, and in this unbelief and distrust they supposed, erroneously as it appears, that they had the support of Dr. Bushnell. Hence, not only were Christians backsliding, but were opposed in many instances to the use of those vigorous and special means which seemed necessary to their being revived. But a worse obstacle still, was the difference among the ministers arising from the supposed heresy of Dr. Bushnell, by reason of which two of the ministers had for several years conscientiously refused to exchange with him, or to enter into any united religious meetings with him—an attitude which of course bred ill-will between the churches. Theological warfare always flourishes in a dry season, and as nothing better existed to occupy public attention, a great zeal was fostered for orthodoxy. This thought was forcibly impressed on my mind the other day, when a gentleman from Bridgeport stated that there had not been a revival there for about twenty years. I thought I could understand why so much earnestness had been exhibited in that quarter in behalf of mere doctrinal soundness. No doubt the Hartford ministers have been sincere in their views and conduct, and have acted as they thought the interests of religion demanded; but amid backslidden churches, how easy it is to over-estimate our Shibboleths and under-estimate practical piety.

In this state of things, the Fourth Congregational church (Rev. Mr. Patton's) and their pastor invited Rev. Charles G. Finney to commence a course of special labor with them, hoping to secure a revival in their own congregation, and perhaps to lead on to a better life in all the churches, though no decided expectation was entertained of direct and full cooperation on their part, it being known that prejudices were indulged by many against Mr. Finney, as the expounder of Oberlin theology. Mr. F. came at the end of December, and began to preach in the Fourth church. But great difficulties in the way of a revival were in that church, growing out of disagreements and contentions respecting some of the deacons. Several weeks elapsed before these were removed and the church enabled to act with union.—Hence the preaching was for some five weeks wholly directed to Christians, to convict them of sin. Dr. Bushnell took Mr. F. by the hand from the very outset, and threw his personal influence at once in favor of the work. Dr. Hawes, desiring to act with proper caution, used measures for some time to satisfy himself that Mr. Finney was sound in doctrine and pru-

dent in action and method. Having by personal conversation and repeated attendance on the meetings, become convinced that there was no reason to withhold his cooperation, he came forward as a candid Christian minister and declared his willingness to give the work his countenance and aid. Still, for some weeks the meetings were responsibly sustained only by the Fourth church, Mr. F. having preached, however, by invitation, once or twice for Drs. Hawes and Bushnell. It was then concluded that the three churches should unite in adopting the meetings, which has been done for several weeks, in this way: Mr. F. preaches twice on the Sabbath and four times during the week, taking the churches on successive days; and a union prayer-meeting, conducted in turn by the pastors, is held four afternoons in the week, passing from church to church with the evening services.

The preaching has been both practical and doctrinal, and amazingly close, pungent and thorough, tending to "break up the fallow ground." Mr. F. has nothing of the nature of wildfire and fanaticism in his preaching or measures. He addresses himself with remarkable singleness to the intellect, rousing the conscience and pressing the will, but appealing scarcely at all to the sensibility. Not a few heard him at first with little or no interest, owing to the length of his discourses, the lack of polish in his style, the colloquiality of his preaching, which is extemporaneous, and the somewhat dry manner in which he commences and often continues for the first half-hour; but in proportion as they repeat their attendance, were they favorably impressed, and particularly so, when their minds were aroused to consider simply the truth which was uttered, and which was brought forth with a clearness and cogency seldom equalled, and an instructiveness to clergy and laity which will not soon be forgotten.

With reference to the results, I would first allude, with gratitude to God, to the union and fellowship which has been to a good degree restored among the ministers and churches which have engaged in the work. If nothing else had been accomplished, this would alone repay the outlay of time and labor. There is reason to believe that a work of permanent good has been done in this respect, and that hereafter we shall all be found standing side by side in the belief and defense of evangelical doctrine, and the practice of that genuine piety whose essence is love. As the next result, I would advert to the conversions among church members. These have seemingly been not a few. Mr. F. has preached so pure a gospel and held up so high a standard, that many self-deceived professors have renounced their hopes and gone into the inquiry-meetings and there found Christ in reality; while true Christians have been deeply searched, greatly humbled and clearly brought out into a new state of advanced spirituality. It is true, however, that a very large portion of the church members have not been reached, partially from prejudices and similar causes, and partially from the fact that the meetings have been held in three different churches, so that the congregations have not been composed of the same persons, and no one church has been continuously acted upon. As to the result among the impenitent, it is impossible to speak with certainty. There has been no attempt to count converts, of whom there are probably many. Sometimes, particularly on Sabbath evenings, as many as four hundred have gone into the inquiry-meeting, even when the invitation has been guarded. A few of the middle-aged have been reached, but the overwhelming mass of inquirers are the young from fifteen to twenty-five, of whom a nobler company in appearance cannot be found on the face of the globe. Female prayer-meetings have been largely attended, in connection with which, as also otherwise, Mrs. Finney's labors have been invaluable. That this work may be permanent in its effects, is both the prayer and hope of many who long for something more abiding in the piety of the churches.

Yours, truly, TENNENT.

MR. FINNEY.—Rev. Charles G. Finney has come from Hartford to Brooklyn. He was to preach last evening in the Plymouth Church, (Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's,) and is engaged for the same place for several evenings next week. The morning prayer meetings in this church are continued with increased attendance and interest. Last Sabbath, twenty persons united with the church on profession. There is great seriousness over the congregation, and many are earnestly seeking salvation. There are about fifty persons who are beginning to rejoice in a new life, besides those already gathered into the church. There will be preaching, by Mr. Finney, every evening of next week.—Independent, 11th inst.

RELIGIOUS MEETINGS.—The nightly meetings which have been held in the Methodist church in this village for the past two months, are still being continued with unabated success. About 150 have been

forward to the anxious seat, a large portion of whom have been accepted on probation.—Rondout Courier, 5th inst.

### An Arctic Revival.

Foreign papers give the following account of a singular outbreak of spiritualism in a remote part of Norway—the very northern extremity of Europe. The juice of genius seems of late to be specially directed into the northern branches of the human tree, (indicated by the puttings forth of such artists as Jenny Lind, Ole Bull, Frederika Bremer, &c.;) and possibly this may be a case of religious inspiration equally worthy of note. It will be observed that in this account we get only the one-sided report of opponents—well-fed bishops, and other officials, who would not be likely to understand the sincerity of repentance that is attributed to the 'fanatics,' and would naturally take an unfavorable view. We shall be curious to hear further from this Arctic revival:

A RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION.—In Finmark, which is the remotest northern region of Norway, almost lost in Arctic snows, a revolution is now raging, which, although purely religious, is attended with all the disastrous circumstances of political troubles. The inhabitants of this desolate region, persuaded by Missionaries of some sect whose tenets have not transpired, have repudiated Christianity, and especially the seventh Commandment, banished the Priests, and now adopt the doctrines of the Missionaries, who profess to have received them directly from Heaven.

The Bishop of Drontheim, in whose diocese Finmark is situated, immediately upon receipt of the intelligence, dispatched two of his clergy to the scene of excitement, who were instructed to show the inhabitants into what errors they had fallen. These gentlemen arrived, and found that the report was less startling than the actual state of things. Universal dejection reigned in Finmark, labor was abandoned, the Churches were deserted and the Pastors driven away. In the streets and in the houses, men, women and children lay upon the ground, with their garments torn, their heads strewn with ashes and bitterly lamenting that until then they had lived in a false faith, ignoring the true God and meriting eternal suffering. The ecclesiastics dispatched by the Bishop apprised him that the fanaticism was so obstinate and the confusion so profound and universal that they saw no other means of preserving the peace of the country and saving the inhabitants from their own fury, than the intervention of the military power. In consequence of these representations, the Governor of Drontheim has dispatched a high officer of Police and an armed force to Finmark. The result of the movement is not yet known.

From the Correspondence of the N. Y. Tribune

#### End and Aims of Congressmen.

WASHINGTON, March 9, 1852.

It is one of those rosy, verdant, unsophisticated fancies of the great mass of the ingenuous youth of the country, who take delight in turning their eyes toward Washington, that the principal aim of the individuals who come to Congress, is to acquire fame and distinction.—It seems a pity to say anything to disturb this agreeable impression, but really we are constrained to declare that it is an awful delusion. There is here and there a young gentleman of ambitious pretensions, who is neither mean, sordid, avaricious, nor mercenary; but the truth must be confessed that the great leading object of an overwhelming majority of the men who come to Washington, either as insiders or outsiders, is to get money, or in some way promote their private interests. The aim of all is to bag the almighty dollar, or its fruits and potentialities. The modes adopted are various; some do it by saving, some by scheming, some by getting contracts, and others, whose position don't admit of their being engaged as contractors, by a private interest in contracts; some by getting bills through Congress slyly that don't seem what they mean, some by procuring appointments, some by trumping up claims, some by fingering appropriations, some by selling their influence, some by operating through Mexican Commissions, some by making opposition, and some by yielding support. But either in one way or another, the one object is pursued. The game is the same, and the chase constant. It is still the filthy lucre, and what the filthy lucre will command, that engrosses the universal attention. Everybody has an 'ax to grind.' Oratory! Oratory! Who cares for an oration or 'a speech' in Washington? Who cares for the opinion of a 'distinguished' man or the merits of a pending measure? The galleries that are visited by a shifting crowd, here to-day and off to-morrow, young men and maidens, like to hear fluent talk, and believe in the man who has the most ready tongue. But Congressmen, men of brains, business and earnest purposes, all of whom have 'axes to grind,' don't care the snap of a finger for the best talker or the best thinker in Washington. They don't recognize any marches to personal distinction. These are all humbug. The only question about a man is, how will he vote on my bill? If he is not right now, he must be made right. Thus it becomes very hard for a man who comes to Washington fresh from the people, with high hopes, ambitious longings, and a purpose to be famous, to withstand the influences that surround him here, and go on in the career mark-

ed out for himself. He must be very strong and independent, or he loses his original aim and goes in with the rest for making what money he can. A man sometimes flourishes for a season or two in the 'highfolution' regions, who at last finds it don't pay, and comes down to the earth and its earthly pursuits.

The consequence of all this is, that Congress gets so full of private influences swaying the judgments and views of members, that a man of the most upright intentions hardly knows himself, half the time, without a pretty serious inquiry, whether he is himself giving an unbiased vote. A man who has to determine his vote while beset by hints, suggestions, inducements, personal appeals, temptations, threats, political and local influences, sophisms, and so forth, must be more than a man to keep always on the line of impartiality and conscientious duty. The ingenuity of the lobby members, who always swarm about Congress, and all of whom have 'axes to grind,' is wonderful.

The weak side of every member whose vote is at all doubtful, (and the Lord knows there are many who are polygars in this respect,) is first discovered. The next step is to fabricate arguments and suggestions to meet the case.—An indefatigable man, who is smart, capable, ingenious and unscrupulous, can just about work miracles on an assembly of two hundred and fifty members. The belief of thousands and tens of thousands, that this measure or that, is carried or defeated on its merits, is the veriest dream of a deluded fancy. The idea of so many that a conclusive argument for or against a proposition determines its fate, is a hallucination to be shocked at. But we do not mean to intimate that in all cases, or even in most cases, the open, gross influence of money operates. We should find it hard to point out even any cases where its control was palpable. Neither do we mean to charge upon Congress any thing beyond ordinary human weakness. But we do nevertheless say that the leading, controlling, all-pervading motives and influences that control the action of almost everybody in and about Washington, high or low, has some near or remote, some direct or indirect relation to the almighty dollar.

#### Table-Talk, by J. H. N.—No. 6.

January 8, 1852.

What we need, in order that every thing which we eat and drink, and all that we come in contact with in various ways, may do us good, is an enlargement of heart that will enable us to discover God in all things. And this requires FAITH—a trustful, confiding spirit in the omnipresent God. This is the spirit that makes the universe a blessing to us. If our hearts are enlarged, so that we see through the mere husks and outside surface of life, to the Divine life at the center—then all our intercourse with creation brings us into vital communication with the Creator.

True faith is not a mere abstract belief in something undefinable; it is a perfect assurance in the almighty power of good—a loving, confident, and cheerful feeling; in a word, it is charity as described by Paul in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. He there applies many definitions to charity, but sums it all up as having in it the essence of victory—it 'beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth.' True faith perceives the omnipotence of God—fears nothing—and is full of everlasting hope, cheerfulness, and endurance. It expects that all things will turn out well; it is a clear perception of the extension and prevalence of the power of life in all worlds, through all time—overcoming all obstructions. Before this spirit of faith, sin, disease and death will melt away like snow before the sun.

Faith is the opposite of fear. Away with the poisonous elements of doubt and fear. The spirit that is fearful toward God, would make us fearful and unbelieving in regard to food.—There is nothing to fear but fear: the universe is full of good, for God is the soul of it. We are dealing with the Spirit of life and health in all things, and nothing can harm us: 'what shall harm us if we be followers of that which is good?' All things are friendly to us—all things are working for our good—all things are harmonizing our life with the essence of all beauty and happiness. Be not, therefore, of a doubtful mind. Every thing that transpires is forwarding the courtship between our souls and God.—"For I am persuaded that neither death,

nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8: 38, 39.

[The series of "HOME-TALKS" (continued in this paper from the Oneida Circular.) will be understood to be off-hand conversational lectures, spoken at our evening fireside, and phonographically reported by Wm. A. Hinds.]

#### Home-Talk by J. H. N.—No. 85.

[REPORTED FOR THE CIRCULAR, MARCH 20, 1851.]

##### THE MINISTRATION OF ANGELS.

My attention is now called to the ministration of angels, as a means of grace that the Primitive church enjoyed. I am certain that we shall find it very profitable to direct our attention to this means of grace, which, though ignored in the common religion of the day, was valued very highly by Christ and the Primitive church.

By the word *angels* we do not mean merely the race of beings that were antecedent to man, but include the whole family in the interior world—the whole body of Christ. We understand that there was a condensation, a coalescence, of that first race of beings with the redeemed of human spirits, at his second coming—so that the whole may properly be considered as one angelic company. There is no impropriety in speaking of the hundred and forty-four thousand saints that John saw in the heavenly world, under the term *angels*.

I cannot feel independent of the necessity that I see Christ was under, (though the Son of God, and as far from needing help as any one could be,) viz. the necessity of recognizing the ministration of angels—the personal assistance of spirits from the invisible world. He was helped from time to time by this ministration. At the time of his temptation in the wilderness, after forty days of trial, it is said 'the angels came and ministered unto him.' Again in his agony in the garden, 'an angel from heaven appeared unto him, strengthening him.' And if we look at the history of the Primitive church, we find this angelic agency in operation through the whole of it. Christ left the church in a comparatively feeble state; but angels were present to secure it at all vital points. They met the disciples at the sepulchre, and explained to them the resurrection. Afterwards, they released some of them from prison. An angel stood by Paul, at a time when destruction seemed inevitable, in the course of his memorable voyage. I do not see how he could have dispensed with help of this kind. He was surrounded by wicked men—the elements were in perfect confusion—shipwreck and starvation were yawning for them, and neither the church nor the world could succor them. In these circumstances, Paul needed something to address him palpably and powerfully, to sustain him; and the angel of God stood by him, spoke to him and strengthened him. Acts 27: 23, 24. That was 'material aid,' and enabled him to brave with heroism the after-perils of the voyage. There were many similar instances in Paul's history.

From these indications we get but a gleam of a great general principle; but this single gleam shows that Christ's words concerning the heirs of salvation were true: 'Their angels do always behold the face of my Father in heaven.' We can see that Christ's body is multiplied, and distributed indefinitely, by the ministration of angels. The Primitive church looked only to the original, interior company as their guardians; but it is our privilege to look both to them and to the one hundred and forty-four thousand who have been added to them. What we may properly call the *body-guard* of God, is immensely increased by those who at the Second Coming entered the inner sphere. The means of grace have been greatly augmented. And it is further to be considered, that that accession to the heavenly host, has been of men and women, whose sympathies are better adapted to humanity, than those of the previous race.

It is not presumptuous for us to take into account this means of grace; on the contrary it is presumptuous for us to neglect and go along without it, saying that Christ is enough for us, in some general, indefinite way. It

would be real modesty in us to turn our attention to that branch of the service. The times are summoning us to it. The reports are, that spirits of the other world are addressing persons in this, in all parts of the country. A process of spiritualization seems to have taken place here at the North, the seat of the great revivals, that is breaking up the partition between this world and the spirit world. More than a thousand persons are said to be mediums of communication with spirits. And the fact that is coming out more prominently than any other in these communications, is, that the deceased friends of the parties, follow and minister to them. That is in accordance with the sphere in which the spirits lived. The family relation is the most interesting, and almost the only important relation, that is recognized in the world, by persons without faith; and this principle naturally manifests itself across the chasm of death. When these communications take place, persons find upon inquiry that it is the spirit of some former friend or relative. We are in another school—one in which we learn to 'know no man after the flesh'—flesh and blood relations, are of minor importance to us; spiritual relations are what we pay attention to. And I do believe that what I call the *body-guard* of God—the angels and the Primitive church, are watching over us. It is not simply a general, corporate, and providential attention—there is also specific, personal attention of that guard, to individuals.

We must cultivate this kind of faith. Every thing should persuade us to understand and cultivate the service of the angels as a means of grace, and to accept modestly any attention they may be ready to offer—any intimation of their willingness to enter into a more intimate acquaintance, and more direct coöperation.—We should be in a position to trust and expect that some of them will be present, and attend to all our affairs. If a child has the nicest attention given to it, and all its little wants cared for, by its mother, we do not think of it as a miracle, but as a matter of course. But in fact, that is God's special providence to the child. You can see that if that special agency which he has provided in its mother, was taken away, the child would suffer. So, if God places angels, and glorious spirits, to look after us, as a mother does after her child, we are under a different dispensation from what we should be without them, as different as the case of a child with a mother is, from that of an orphan.—We could get along as orphans, and be cared for in many respects, and so we could get along without the ministration of angels; but we should obviously find great benefits in their ministration, and, according to the plan of God, should suffer in being deprived of it. If it is true, as the world are finding out, that the spirits of their friends are waiting on them, and if it is true, in a more glorious sense, that we are waited on, and watched over, by angelic hosts, then certainly we ought to make much of it, and give our attention to it.

The spirits that we have over us, do not deal with us in the way of "rappings;" and it is an honor to them that they do not. They do not come to us exciting our curiosity, and confirming our mere carnal attachments; and I say, so much the better. I think the school of spirits that is dealing with us, though it does not make so much display of local information, and wonderful disclosures of a certain kind, is dealing with us far more profitably and wisely than the rapping spirits. It is their wish that we should recognize them in an interior way, as managing our purposes and spiritual interests. They deal with us in the way of *edifying*—not in communicating mysteries, and exciting our curiosity. It is an edifying ministration that I want; and that I believe we have. What is needed, is a more clear perception—more freedom and intimacy in entering into relations with the angel service. If your spirits are simple and childlike, and you have faith to turn inward to your true friends, you can always have more instructive and interesting companions than this outward sphere can furnish.

The ministration of angels should be taken

into account as a very important means of grace that God takes to save us. I protest against the doctrine that the age of miracles is past, and equally against the idea that the age of angelic ministration is past. I insist that the ministration of angels is, and always will be, second only in importance to the ministration of Christ. God employs for our salvation, agencies of different degrees of importance.—First, the cross of Christ, and his eternal spiritual sovereignty. Second to that, is the ministration of angels. And only in the third place do we come to the ministry of men. That second agency is commonly left entirely out of account. People recognize the agency of Christ, and then drop down to the agency of men.

At least one half the benefit in the case, will come by our appreciating the truth respecting the angels. They can and do look after us from our birth; but we shall have double the benefit of it, when we come to understand and appreciate it. It is like the case of a foundling—a child placed in circumstances where its mother does not choose to recognize it, and yet has a motherly care over it. The child finds itself cared for and protected, but does not know its protector; and either recognizes it as blind chance, or ascribes it to some general unknown agency. We can see what a great advantage it would be for the parties to be brought together, so that the child might know its mother.

It is a branch of civilization that most of you have probably hardly begun to attend to, to know how to deal with the spirit world, angels and ministering spirits; but you ought not to consider your education at all complete till you can go into that society and behave acceptably, receiving their attentions in a proper manner. I will speak a word in behalf of the invisible family, and beg that they may not be imposed upon in consequence of the freedom to which they are inviting us. To pure spirits fellowship is a very important matter—vastly more important than in the case of those who care nothing about the interior. In the world, persons may enter into fellowship with each other without any special civilization on either side; but it is not possible to rush into fellowship with heavenly spirits in such a manner.

We are ambitious and determined to make this paper what it should be in every respect. It is not a private project, but as we conceive, is instituted and sanctioned by the interior church. Now if this is so—if they are to have any connection with a press in this world—they will demand that it shall be, not only good of its kind, but that it shall grow into all kinds of perfection, both of matter and execution. We are eager to understand our profession, and to be enlarged by help from all the worlds.—Our true subscribers are equally interested with us in this matter, and can render essential aid. What we feel the need of now, is intellectual and spiritual concert—the thorough *working* interest of all toward the improvement of the paper. We want the response of many minds and hearts, in every available way—in prayers, criticism, and counsel, as well as in material aid. Nothing can be perfected from a single point of view. Give us the benefit of your eyes, friends; and the reacting magnetism of your thoughts, in regard to the conduct of the paper. Think of it—interest yourselves in it, and communicate. A return illumination of this kind from our readers, would greatly assist in developing the paper in a symmetrical, satisfactory way. We renounce professional pride, in favor of progress; and prefer, at any cost of criticism, to offer our employers a sheet suitable to their truthfulness and taste. Let those whose hearts have been touched with the idea, consider themselves involved with us in this calling and destiny. Throw in your contributions, and let us see what we can do.

The election of God should be the greatest possible inducement to cultivate in us an immortal eagerness for improvement. A person should say to himself, "If I am the elect of God, a member of Christ, and so under the special providence of God, I have every encouragement to pray for, and expect God to give and nourish in me, an almighty purpose to grow and perfect myself in every good thing."

We ought to raise our imaginations up to the level of—not our own ambition—but the ambition of God for us. Paul tells us what that is in these words—"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Every one may assume that his destiny is to walk in a glorious career of good works.